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Gray Davis
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Managers and Supervisors

FROM: Cindy Francisco
Safety Coordinator

DATE: June 6, 2002

SUBJECT: SAFETY MEETING IDEAS -- JUNE 2002

Suggested issues to discuss during your next meeting are:

1. Recording Keeping Updates

With the new fiscal year approaching, make sure your required records are up-to-date. These forms should be maintained in your (the manager's or supervisor's) office files:

- Std. Form 261 *"Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business"* for employees who use their private car for state business. This form is required to be completed annually.
- Defensive Drivers Training Certificate. Employees who drive on state business should take this class every four years. Are they up-to-date?
- Medical Information. Do you have a list of your employees, their home telephone numbers, addresses, important medical information such as allergies to medication and who to contact in case of emergency? Is this information up-to-date?

2. Don't Take Your Back Problems Sitting Down

The State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) states that one of the reasons why so many of us have back problems is due to the way our work and lifestyle has evolved. As people grow more sedentary in an increasingly automated world, we're doing more sitting and adding extra pounds. As a result, our backs are becoming more vulnerable to injury.

Sitting, especially slouching, is one of the most common positions during our waking hours. It also happens to be one of the worst positions for our backs, by putting continuous pressure on the lower back muscles and disks.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.

California Environmental Protection Agency

Low back pain is a warning that something is wrong. Recognize this warning and take steps to prevent a back problem from getting worse. Here are some helpful suggestions if you sit for long periods during the course of your workday:

- Choose the right chair, a chair that supports the length and width of your back with adjustable armrests and a seat height you can adjust.
- Sit smart. Sit straight and close to your work, don't slump forward. Your buttocks should rest against the back of the seat. Your knees should stick out a hand's width beyond the edge of the chair with your feet resting comfortable on the floor or footrest.
- Adjust your work height and angle. Your surface work and keyboard should be at elbow level. If you work at a computer, the top of your screen should be at eye level.
- If possible, get up regularly and stretch or, shift your sitting position at least once every 30 minutes.

Vehicular vibration adds additional stress to the backs of those who drive long distances. Here's some back comfort tips for drivers:

- Position the seat forward so that your knees are bent. If the tilt of the seats can be adjusted, change the angle slightly every so often.
- Placing a cushion at the small of your back and sitting in a slightly reclining angle may ease pressure on your lower back while driving.
- Change your sitting position frequently or get out of the vehicle every hour and walk around for a few minutes.
- Grip the steering wheel at the nine and three o'clock hand positions. This puts your arms and shoulders in a more neutral position.

There are also some general lifestyle choices which can reduce stress on your back. Sleep on a firm mattress, control your weight, getting some exercise, and for men, take that bulging wallet out of your back pocket when you sit. Make sitting a pleasure not a pain.

3. Driving Comfort Tips

For more tips on comfort while driving, read the attached State Compensation Insurance Fund Loss Control Bulletin on the subject.

Document your meeting by using Form HS-1 "Safety Meeting Report" which I have attached for your convenience. This can also be used, if you choose, to route the information to each employee. This record should be kept in your files for one year.